

Message Text

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SUBJ: FY-76 TOGO FERTILIZER UTILIZATION PROJECT

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1. AT OUTSET I WANT TO SUGGEST THAT WE KEEP IN PERSPECTIVE GOT RHETORIC, WHICH NEITHER IN MEDIA NOR IN PUBLIC POLITICAL GATHERINGS HAS BEEN "HOSTILE" TO US SPECIFICALLY. GOT HAS TWO MAJOR GOALS, FOR WHICH IT SEEKS TO MOBILIZE POPULAR SUPPORT:
A) ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE AND DEVELOPMENT, AND B) NATIONAL UNITY.

2. TOGO SEES FIRST OF THESE GOALS AS BASED UPON CONTROL OVER ITS NATURAL RESOURCES. THUS, EARLY THIS YEAR GOT NATIONALIZED FRANCO-AMERICAN PHOSPHATE MINING COMPANY, FOR WHICH IT ALREADY HAS MADE PROMPT AND MUTUALLY SATISFACTORY COMPENSATION. ACHIEVEMENT OF SECOND GOAL DEPENDS UPON PEOPLE'S SENSE OF IDENTIFICATION AND PRIDE OF TOGOLESE CITIZENS. GOT HAS BORROWED NEGATIVE RHETORIC OF ANTI-IMPERIALISM AND ANTI-COLONIALISM FROM MILITANT THIRD-WORLD STATES TO STIR POPULAR SENTIMENT FOR NATIONAL UNITY. IT IS TRUE THAT PROMISES OF AID FROM SOME OF THOSE STATED, I.E. NORTH KOREAN AND CHINA, HAVE LED GOT ALSO TO TAKE POSITIONS ON SOME INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ISSUES (KOREA, CAMBODIA) INIMICAL TO US INTERESTS.

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3. IN CONTEXT OF BROADER US INTERESTS, TOGO OFFERS POSITIVE PROSPECTS FOR PARTNERSHIP IN DEVELOPMENT. AGRICULTURE SECTOR - PRODUCTION, STORAGE AND CREDIT - IS PARTICULAR AREA IN WHICH USG NOW HAS MEANS AND POLICY SUPPORT FOR US-GOT BILATERAL PROJECTS COMPLEMENTING REGIONAL PROJECTS THROUGH ENTENTE FUND. EVERYTHING HERE FAVORS OUR EFFORT: PRESIDENT EYADEMA'S EMPHASIS ON, AND TOGO'S CAPACITY FOR, INCREASED FOOD PRODUCTION; CURRENT GOT INTEREST IN FERTILIZER PRODUCTION AND SUBSIDY TO FARMERS; AND TOGO'S PHYSICAL AND POLITICAL RELATIONSHIPS IN WEST AFRICAN SUB-REGION.

4. THERE IS, MOREOVER, LARGE RESERVOIR OF FRIENDSHIP FOR US, BOTH AMONG GOT OFFICIALS AND PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS. GOT HAS SPECIAL APPRECIATION OF PEACE CORPS ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING SELF-HELP PROJECTS FOR WHICH DOLS 109,000 WAS DISPERSED FY 1974 (WE EASILY COULD ABSORB MORE SELF-HELP FUNDS). GOT'S GRATITUDE FOR PC MANIFESTED MID-OCTOBER IN MINISTER EDUCATION MALOU'S SUPERB DINNER DANCE GIVEN FOR PCV'S AND THEIR TOGOLESE COUNTERPARTS. DURING TRIP UPCOUNTRY LAST WEEK, I ENCOUNTERED EQUAL MIXTURE OF APPRECIATION FOR OUR PAST WORKS AND REQUESTS FOR MORE ASSISTANCE FROM VARIOUS DISTRICT OFFICERS ("CHEFS DE CORCONSCRIPTION"), ALL OF WHOM ARE APPOINTED BY PRESIDENT. MOST RECENTLY, IBRD OFFICIAL HERE LAST FRIDAY TO DISCUSS CIMAO CLINKER PLANT WITH GOT, TOLD US MINES MINISTER MIVENDOR HAD SPOKEN TO HIM ABOUT DESIRABILITY OF USAID PARTICIPATION IN CIMAO.

5. AS REGARDS FRENCH REACTION, CTMB NATIONALIZATION SEEMS NOT TO HAVE DAMPENED GOF'S INTEREST IN PARTICIPATING IN TOGOLESE INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS. ACCORDING TO "TOGO-PRESSE," FRENCH EXPRESSED INTEREST IN CONSTRUCTION OF PHOSPHATE FERTILIZER FACTORY HERE DURING EYADEMA'S RECENT VISIT TO PARIS, AND EYADEMA LATER ANNOUNCED FRENCH WOULD PARTICIPATE (REFTEL C). FRENCH HAVE FOLLOWED UP WITH GROUP OF EXPERTS WHICH IS NOW IN TOGO REPORTEDLY PERFORMING PRE-FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR FERTILIZER PLANT. THUS, WE CAN ANTICIPATE FRENCH REACTION AGAINST US COMPETITION IN PROJECT GOF MAY WANT FOR ITSELF. GOF NO DOUBT WOULD BE ADVERSE TO OUR PARTICIPATION, EITHER THROUGH AID ASSISTANCE OR PRIVATE SECTOR INITIATIVE. GIVEN ACTIVE FRENCH INTEREST, US SHOULD MOVE CAUTIOUSLY TO AVOID CREATING SITUATION IN WHICH GOT MIGHT PLAY OFF ONE POTENTIAL DONOR AGAINST ANOTHER.

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6. NEVERTHELESS, THERE IS HISTORY OF US INTEREST. DEPT WILL RECALL CHEMICAL CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION OF NEW YORK'S 1973 APPLICATION TO EX-IM BANK FOR FINANCING DOLS 24 MILLION OF US EQUIPMENT FOR FERTILIZER FACTORY PROPOSED BY SOCIETE TOGOLAISE DES ENGRAIS (STEN), JOINT BELGIAN-TOGOLESE COMPANY. ON BALANCE, I WOULD SUPPORT USG'S EXPLORING FERTILIZER PLANT AND UTILIZATION PROJECT WITH GOT, PROVIDED IT IS DONE WITH UTMOST

CIRCUMSPECTION.
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